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TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)
SUBJECT: IRAQ; IRAN; THE AMIA BOMBING CASE; AMBASSADOR WAYNE; CHINA;
TERRORISM; 11/14/06

1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Today's leading international stories include US strategy in Iraq and Iran; mounting tension between Argentina and Iran on the AMIA bombing probe; the US commitment to cooperation with the GOA and Interpol authorities to arrest those suspected of having organized and carried out the attack against the AMIA; expectations for the meeting between US Ambassador Wayne and Argentine Economy Minister Felisa Miceli; Chinese corruption; and Argentina's struggle against terrorism.

2. OPINION PIECES

- "Bush refuses to hold talks with Iran, but he shows a flexible attitude on Iraq"

Leonardo Mindez, on special assignment in Washington for leading "Clarín," writes (11/14) "Iraq is one thing and Iran is another. At least this is what George W. Bush tried to convey during his meetings at the White House with the Study Group on Iraq and Israeli PM Ehud Olmert.

"While the US president is now willing to hear proposals on the strategy to be followed to get out of the Iraqi 'swamp,' in the case of Iran, instead, he has an inflexible attitude - there will not be any talks with Tehran as long as it does not relinquish its nuclear program.

"In the aftermath of the G.O.P.'s defeat in last week's US legislative elections, the head of the White House is 'walking along a winding and unknown road.' He is compelled to make some tradeoffs in his political program, but he is not willing to distort the profile of his administration.

"In this way, he assumed the electorate's rejection of the current situation in Iraq, removed Donald Rumsfeld and showed (as he had never done) that he is open to rethinking the military strategy alongside Democratic leaders. Both the White House and the Democratic opposition eagerly expect recommendations from the bipartisan group that was formed by Congressional initiative to analyze the Iraqi conflict.

"... Several media and analysts argued that the work could result in advice to divide Iraqi territory into autonomous Sunni, Shiite and Kurd areas, and promote dialogue with Syria and Iran in order to involve them as stabilizing forces in Iraq before starting a gradual troop withdrawal."

- "Mounting tension with Iran - the Argentine Government sent a formal protest"

Daniel Santoro, political columnist of leading "Clarín," writes (11/14) "After 48 hours of uncertainty, the (Argentine) Government sent a formal letter of protest to Iran for the statements made by a top Iranian prosecutor, who asked for the arrest of Prosecutor Alberto Nisman and former Judge Juan Jose Galeano...."

"... However, the Argentine Government reiterated in the letter 'its purpose of maintaining a constructive dialogue with Iran' and urged the Iranian government to cooperate in the clarification of the AMIA bombing case.

"The letter is crucial because it could lead to an escalation in the diplomatic conflict implying a suspension or rupture in diplomatic ties between the two countries, which is an extreme measure that is only taken when two nations are at war.

"The cautiousness of the Argentine letter is based on fears of a hypothetical third attack, following the attacks against the Israeli Embassy in 1992 and against AMIA in 1994."

- "The US will help to capture Iranians that have been accused by Argentina"

Ana Baron, Washington-based correspondent for leading "Clarín," writes (11/14) "In a new official communiqué, the US has committed its cooperation with the Argentine Government and Interpol authorities to arrest former Iranian president Ali Rafsanjani, other seven Iranians and one Lebanese, all of whom are suspected of having organized and performed the bombing against AMIA.

"This means a higher degree of commitment on behalf of the US than when, in the '90s, Judge Juan Jose Galeano asked the UK to extradite a former Iranian ambassador to Argentina, Hadi Soleimanpour..., and the UK decided not to do it. And the US did not want or was unable to do anything to prevent this from happening.

"Yesterday's communiqué from the US State Department... added itself to the praise from the White House's spokesperson, Tony Snow, of the Argentine judiciary.

"... The cooperation between the US and Argentina on the Iran issue will let Nestor Kirchner distance himself from Hugo Chavez but, at the same time, it poses the risk of new criminal attacks against our country. Experts in terrorism have not dismissed the possibility of new attacks, but told 'Clarín' that the likelihood 'is not very high due to the complicated international situation.'

"Aaron Manes, author of the book 'Terrorism Profiles,' said that 'if the international community wants Iran to honor the international arrest warrants, just like the US does, the danger of a criminal attack will increase'...

"... Judge Rodolfo Canicoba Corral's request for international arrest warrants against the Iranians and the big repercussion it had in the US newspapers could not have gone down better in the Bush administration.

"Following the defeat in US legislative elections, now that both the Democratic opposition and the Blair administration are pressuring the US to negotiate with Iran on its nuclear program, Argentina gave Bush a new piece of evidence of 'ties between the Tehran government and international terrorism,' just like the White House's communiqué pointed out.

"The truth is that the request for international arrest warrants will serve Kirchner to distance himself from Chavez, whose ties with Iran scare Washington."

- "The power of those within"

Business-financial, center-right "InfoBae" carries an opinion piece by its columnist Muriel Balbi, who writes (11/14) "Last week's US legislative elections showed some reality on which US President Bush could not continue turning his back. From now on, his loss of domestic power will make him take into account international consensus as regards his foreign initiatives.

"... Obviously enough, the defeat of the G.O.P. not only changed

some legislators' seats but will end up redesigning the G.O.P. and correcting the direction of the Bush administration.

"... Bush was able to ignore those outside his country, but he will not be able to ignore the voice of those inside the country. His lack of domestic support will compel him to obtain international support in any action he undertakes overseas. It is right here where the huge power of those within really shows."

- "US Ambassador will meet today with Miceli"

Business-financial "Ambito Financiero" reports (11/14) "(Argentine Economy Minister) Felisa Miceli will receive today the new US Ambassador to Buenos Aires, Earl Anthony Wayne..."

"Today's will be the second meeting between the US diplomat and the Argentine Government official following their encounter in Washington during the IMF/IDB Annual Assembly. Today's will be an important meeting because they will attempt to revive the bilateral ties between the two countries, which have been impaired following last year's Mar del Plata SOA..."

"Among the economic topics to be tackled, the US diplomat will convey the concerns expressed by American business leaders during an AmCham meeting... Their main concern is focused on the still prevailing price accords and the possibility of an energy crisis."

"US businessmen also expressed their concerns about IPR legislation in force and the lack of protection they see in the country for new developments that are being copied."

- "Miceli expects Wayne to complain about (Argentina's) public rates policy"

Conservative "La Prensa" reports (11/14) "The main topics to be tackled by (Argentine) Economy Minister Felisa Miceli and brand new US Ambassador Earl Anthony Wayne will be the evolution of regional integration, price accords and public services rates."

"According to Economy Ministry sources, the encounter will open the US Ambassador's economic agenda in the country."

"According to an important economic source, 'there are some topics of concern for the USG that will be tackled during the meeting between Ambassador Wayne and Minister Miceli.'"

"One of those issues is the Argentine Government's price policy, which has raised concern and rejection among some foreign corporations."

"Also, some Economy Ministry members admitted that... frozen public service rates raise uncertainty among foreign ambassadors and businessmen..."

"Obviously enough, regional integration is a thorny issue in the US-Argentine economic relationship, particularly following the friction experienced during the Mar del Plata Summit of the Americas, in which the GOA ratified its rejection of the FTAA and its decision to promote a broadened Mercosur."

"In the aftermath of the SOA, it was noticed that the USG managed to 'twist the arm' of some countries by reaching several trade deals."

"... On the other hand, some members of the Argentine economic team pointed out that this first meeting between Miceli and Wayne will serve to show the progress made by the Argentine economy and, particularly, the possibilities of investment offered by the country."

- "Wayne will meet with De Vido and after that with Miceli"

Hernan de Arriba, columnist of business-financial, center-right "InfoBae," writes (11/14) "... Economy Minister Felisa Miceli met with Donna Hrinak, the head of the Corporate and Governmental Issues Division for Latin America, Kraft Foods."

"... As a matter of fact, it was apre-advance meeting for the

meeting Miceli will hold today with the new US Ambassador Anthony Wayne.

"Before that, the US diplomat will meet with Planning Minister Julio de Vido... Wayne has already listened to US businessmen with interests in Argentina, who complained about price accords and expressed doubts about the energy supply for the next months."

13. EDITORIALS

- "Corruption in China"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" editorializes (11/14) "... The 2006 International Bribe Payers Index, drafted by Transparency International, analyzed the tendency to bribe exhibited by the main corporations of the 30 largest exporting nations. Among other considerations, the report pointed out that three of the big emerging exporting powers (India, China and Russia) have the lowest levels of transparency and exhibit alarming levels of corruption.

"... Actually, China's scores in the Corruption Control Index have lowered during recent years, from -0.20 in 1998, to -0.40 in 2002 and -0.69 in 2005.

"As happens in all the countries that suffer the consequences of corruption, the greatest obstacle in fighting corruption and defeating it is the Judiciary's weakness and lack of independence."

- "Terrorism's impunity"

Conservative "La Prensa" editorializes (11/14) "... The decision to ask for the international capture of eight former Iranian government officials... for the 1994 AMIA bombing case deserves acknowledgement due to its value vis-à-vis terrorism, particularly against a country that has been extremely aggressive during last year.

"However, the prosecutor's conclusions have brought few new elements to the case while his initiative runs the risk of remaining only as a gesture of bravery.

"This new commitment against the impunity of terrorism should be praised because it will improve Argentina's image in the eyes of the international community. Meanwhile, Iran's response is not in tune with international public law.

"Perhaps, the time has come for the GOA to analyze resorting to The Hague International Criminal Court in order to maintain its steady pursuit of justice, which should not be twisted by those whose power lies in violence."

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WAYNE